PANCHAYATI RAJ

AUGUST 1961

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PANCHAYATI RAJ

(Incorporating Gram Sevak)

SRAVANA-1883

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Editor : R. N. GUPTA

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PAYMENT TO CONTRIBUTORS

To encourage readers of Panchayati Raj to share with their friends their thoughts, experiences and achievements in the field of Community Development, Co-operatives and Panchayats, it has been decided to pay for letters and contributions appearing in this journal with effect from March, 1961. The payment will be made at the rate of Rs. 5 for each letter and about Rs. 10 for each accepted article. Readers are requested to write articles and letters on subjects of common interest and to address them to :

The Editor, Panchayati Raj,
Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation,
371, Krishi Bhavan,
New Delhi.

THE MAIN CATALYST

S. K. Dey

PANCHAYATI RAJ is being developed as the statutory pattern of representative institutions linking the Gram Sabha with the Lok Sabha in an inter-connected system of democratic administration. Youth programme in our villages is going to be developed hereafter as the main catalyst to impart vitality to activities on the ground and to our representatives in the institutions. Old habits, they say, are hard to die. The older generation, but for some exceptions who refuse to get old regardless of age, develops set habits and patterns of behaviour. It is unfair of the community to expect these to change overnight. An older person can be made to accept a new concept in theory. To ask him to practise it against a life pattern of behaviour to the contrary is to be unfair to the old, to mock at history and to delude ourselves. It is futile to expect to build new India with old blood and sweat. The foundation of the new mansion must of course be built on the good old earth. The bricks have to be moulded anew. The mortar has to be provided afresh and the slurry has to be provided by the warm blood of the young. No nation has ever been built except on this pattern. Even creation survives because youth blends with youth.

I am very happy in this context that we are having an all-India camp of key personnel who will guide and direct the long overdue youth programme under the Community Development movement. The camp acquires special significance because it will deal with an agenda based on an action programme on all fronts. Before the camp concludes, I hope, it will succeed in evolving a basic programme that can be implemented throughout the country with adaptation to the local needs and resources. The programme necessarily will have to cover activities which will be economic and productive on the one hand and culturally creative and emotionally stimulating on the other. Youth alone can readily respond to new ideas and practices. All programmes under Community Development, be they in the field of agriculture, animal husbandry, public health, education, social education or the multitudinous other fields of development in the village, which call for new technology and modern thinking, can begin effectively only when the youth can act the pioneers. I hope and pray that this first camp at Taradevi may be activated by a spark of the pooled wisdom innate in our culture to release the colossal force out of its present uneasy captivity.

(This message was given by Shri S. K. Dey, Union Minister for Community Development and Co-operation, to the National Camp for Rural Youth Workers held at Taradevi, from 29th June to 3rd July 1961.)

Dawn of a New Era

Vishnu Dutt

The Panchayati Raj movement has recently been subjected to a self-analytical churning both on the ideological as well as the practical plane in a manner it has never been done before. This is all to the good for it spells health and vigorous activity inherent in the movement.

Immediately after the Panchayat elections in the Punjab were over, the Indian Institute of Public Opinion conducted a survey in March this year to assess the impact of Panchayati Raj on the people's minds as also some other relevant issues. The survey establishes the overwhelming support for the "grassroot democracy" by the general public, and panches of almost all ages, levels of education, religions and occupations. The present system of elections was favoured by 82% of the general public.

REALISTIC AND PRACTICAL

As if to shake off any sense of complacency that might be induced as a result of the aforesaid survey, the Udaipur Seminar of Pradhans and Pramukhs of Rajasthan held from 8th to 11th May, took stock of things in a more realistic and practical way. It suggested several remedies for making Panchayati Raj more effective and for averting the inherent dangers. Among other things, it emphasised that the Gram Sabha should be brought more and more into the picture and that in the Panchayat Samitis, Standing Committees as such should play a more important role than any single individual including the President. Experience has shown that this is the only practical way in which village leadership can be multiplied and an increasing number of village people can be drawn actively into the vortex of the movement. The Panchayats can be made more vigilant and active only if they are made responsible to the Gram Sabha in one way or the other. Another danger to the evolution of mass village leadership springs from the smothering weight of too much tutelage at the hands of M.Ps. and M.L.As. Consequently, there has been a chorus of demand against their interference in Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads throughout the country. The Central Committee of the Planning Commission, too, was seized of this vital matter and it has since decided that no M.P. or M.L.A. should be eligible to hold office or to vote.

The Udaipur Sammelan took note of the urgent necessity of looking after the interests of the weaker sections and it recommended that it should be the responsibility of the Zila Parishads to safeguard the interests of the underdeveloped sections and the minorities living in Panchayat Samiti areas. This will to some extent rectify the impression shared by many that the Zila Parishads have got no well-defined executive functions to perform and are at best advisory in character. Besides, the minorities and the underdog will have a champion in the form of a statutory body to espouse their cause.

IDEOLOGICAL

While these discussions on petty routine and administrative problems have been carried on, there has come a strong gale of wind, healthy and invigorating, on the ideological plane. This has sought to deepen and broaden the very foundations of the movement,—nay of the entire body politic of the country. The prophetic voice comes from Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan—the Sarvodya leader who sees in the movement not a mere "procedural reform of administration at the lower levels but a political revolution of the greatest significance for the people". Indeed, he envisages a radical reform in the conception of the very word 'democracy'. According to him, it should be a 'participating democracy',—that is one in which

the largest number of people partake in the maximum number of activities carried on from day to day at various administrative levels. This, according to him, is the only solution of the political ills from which various countries in the world are suffering today. This, in essence, provides the philosophy or the ideology of our movement. Whether or not we are able to reach the ideal, is a different matter. But the existence of an ideal as such is important in itself for it provides the necessary inspiration and guidance so essential for the success of any movement. Thus if we begin to view upon Panchayati Raj as a precursor of the 'Participating Democracy' rather than a mere administrative device to secure fuller peoples' co-operation for the development plans, an unprecedented and unbounded mass enthusiasm will be unleashed.

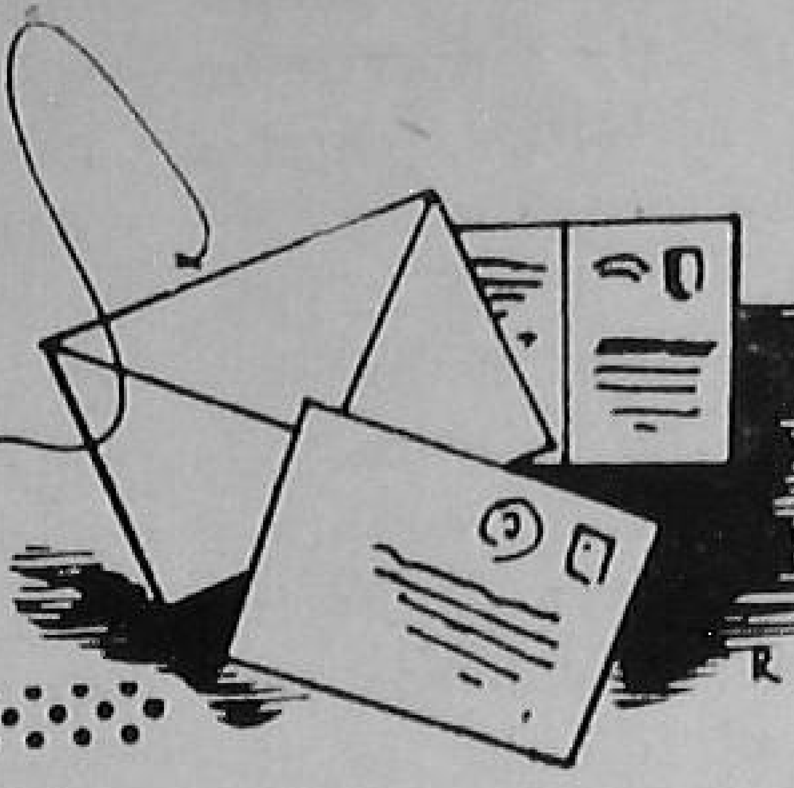
Shri Narayan has suggested several far-reaching changes. One of these relates to the extension of Panchayati Raj to higher tiers of self-governing bodies at the State and national levels so as to have an organic structure from the Gram Sabha to the Lok Sabha. The indirect election from each successive lower body to the next higher one is no doubt the most natural step and follows logically from the concept of transferring maximum responsibility to the lowest unit. Besides having the advantage of low election expenses, the arrangement confers real power and sovereignity to each successive lower body over the next higher one. A lower unit in that case would not have a feeling of being reduced to the status of a mere agent of a higher body at whose bidding it acts. And as forcefully brought out by Shri Narayan in his thesis "Swaraj for the people" that as compared to an amorphous mass of people, a well-knit organised body particularly a statutory body can control the seats of Government in a better manner.

CLARION CALL

Another suggestion of far-reaching consequences put forward by Shri Narayan is that Panchayati Raj elections should be carried out unanimously without the political parties entering the lists. The desirability of conducting unanimous elections in order to promote and keep up the atmosphere of love, goodwill and unity so vital for the maximum progress and welfare of the village, is recognised on all hands. The State Governments have striven to achieve this end by offering prizes to Panchayats holding unanimous elections. From the results achieved in various States like Punjab, Rajasthan, U.P. and Bihar where Panchayat elections have been held recently one is likely to infer that appreciable success has been achieved. But there are people who think that the success is only superficial; it is skin deep and not heart deep. Shri Narayan has suggested radical changes in the electoral system based on party lines.

It is to be seen whether the country is prepared to effect these and other fundamental changes in our Constitution. It is on a satisfactory reply to this question that the future progress of Panchayati Raj depends. Let us hope we will rise to the occasion. The clarion call has for once come from the All India Panchayat Parishad itself which held its deliberations recently in Jaipur and was guided in its deliberations by the towering personality of Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan. In clear and unmistakable terms, it has called upon the residents of each village "to assume collective responsibility to see that there was no unemployed person in the village and if there were any, they should be supported till they get employment; and to resolve their disputes inside the village itself". This is the dawn of the new era that is Panchayati Raj.

LETTERS



DIARY OR NO DIARY?

Sir

SOMETIME BACK I had requested you to publish the diary of a Gram Sevak in your esteemed Panchayati Raj so that the common man may understand the utility of the activities of the Gram Sevak. Till now it is not published. I once more make the request that the diary of a Gram Sevak in Madras State be published. I also wish to tell you that Sir Philip Sydney's philosophy is quite different from that of living men. There is something beyond human power that makes man happy and prosperous.

Yours etc.
R. V. Iyer

391, Abjiamavattaram
Tanjore.

* * *

Sir,

In compliance with Shri R. V. Iyer's letter, dated 20-9-60, published in the Panchayati Raj of December, 1960, its editor has very kindly invited the Gram Sevaks to contribute their diaries for publication in the journal. But since then, no diary has been published.

Gram Sevak writes his diary, but who reads it? And indeed what is there to read except the monotonous account of meeting the people and explaining to them the hackneyed things. The diary of the Gram Sevak is now the diary of the Patwari and the Kanugo just to be passed on.

There are no two opinions about the utility of maintaining a diary. Almost every great man of the world has appreciated its use and some of them have even been made by it. It provides an opportunity for retrospection and self-analysis. But are these purposes served by the Gram Sevak's present diary? Not at all. On the other hand, in many cases it is maintained falsely. It is not difficult for a shrewd B.D.O. to find it out.

What should then be done with the Gram Sevak's diary? The development programme is not meant to be carried on in a routine manner. Hence if the diary has no utility it should not exist. Certainly it must not exist for making false entries and for just passing it on.

To some, these views might appear somewhat unconventional. "What then is the alternative?" one may well ask. There is a way out. My suggestion is that diaries should be maintained to note down the problems faced by the Gram Sevaks in their day to day contact with the villagers. In fact there should be two diaries,—one which is readily available with the Gram Sevak and the other to be referred to the B.D.O. or the experts for advice. In monthly meetings these books should be submitted to the B.D.O. and the problems discussed in the presence of all the Gram Sevaks. In case some problems prove too tough for the Block Level Extension staff these may be referred to the District level experts for solution. The B.D.O. will do well if he sends selected problems of general interest for publication in the Panchayati Raj.

Maintenance of such diaries will be purposeful and in this way a two-way traffic would be established between the people and the experts which is the aim of all extension work.

Yours etc.
Narendra Sahai Saxena
Tehsildar, Sangod,
Distt. Kotah.

(We welcome the useful suggestion made by our correspondent in the above letter and hope that the Gram Sevaks will like the idea. On

their part the B.D.Os may encourage the maintenance of problem—oriented diaries. We will be only too glad to publish extracts from such diaries supplied to us from time to time—Ed.)

HIGHER TRAINING FOR BEST GRAM SEVAKS

Sir,

The news that the Ministry of C.D. & Co-operation has decided to give opportunity for higher training in rural institutes to deserving Gram Sevaks in order to help them to improve their future prospects, has sent a wave of satisfaction and happiness amongst the entire Gram Sevaks. This will now open up avenues of further progress to the Gram Sevaks who after several years of hard work and experience in the field has become totally frustrated and disappointed since there was no hope of their further rise in their career. Therefore, the Government rightly deserve the heartfelt thanks of the entire community of Gram Sevaks.

The Ministry will, no doubt, lay down qualifying conditions on the basis of which the Gram Sevaks are to be selected for the higher training. May I offer an humble suggestion that the Union Ministry should itself undertake the responsibility for giving higher training to the Gram Sevak who has been adjudged the best on All India and Union Territories basis. The State Government in their turn, will similarly select for training the Gram Sevak who has been adjudged the best at the State level. This will be a fitting and more useful way of recognising the merits of the best Gram Sevak of the year at the National, Union territories and State levels. I am voicing the feelings of the Gram Sevaks when I say that they would value their being selected for higher education more than the prize itself.

Apart from other considerations the very fact that a Gram Sevak has been adjudged best, makes him the most suitable candidate for receiving higher training. Obviously, such training would make him a more useful and better agent for bringing about the mighty social revolution that is C.D. programme. It will be in the interest of both the country and the Gram Sevak.

24-5-61 Yours etc.
Delhi *One interested*

(This is a good suggestion. The State Govt. have been directed to sponsor the names of good Gram Sevaks, and we may be confident that they will not forget their best Gram Sevak—Ed.)

WHAT TURNS THE HEAD?

Sir,

I thank you for publishing my letter in the March issue of *Panchayati Raj*. One comes across many instances of official apathy or indifference. Even the corporations set up by Government on business footings are not immune from it. I would like to quote an instance of the attitude of a small Industries official.

Some of us drove in a car to one of the Extension centres for ceramic products. Unfortunately we reached there about five minutes before the closing time. The ceramic products are kept in cupboards under lock and key. There seemed to be only two cupboards there. I approached the official in charge and asked him if we could see the ceramic products made in the workshop. He turned down our request point blank. And saying arrogantly, that he will not allow it, he went on looking into his registers to show that he was otherwise busy. But as there seemed nothing for him to do at the moment he kept on shuffling the pages. I asked him, "Are they not for sale and display for propaganda purposes?" He replied in an arrogant way, that since it was only five minutes to closing time and he would not wait after that he will not allow me to see them. Then sulkily he added "If you make your purchases within two minutes, I will permit you to see them".

I was taken aback at his arrogant manners. All his assistants gathered in the room to see the cause of annoyance of their boss. It is a small place and I believe there are hardly any visitors except perhaps some who are conducted there on official tours.

These are the people who are supposed to promote and help industry. These are the people who are supposed to make propaganda by demonstarting how things are to be

(*Continued on page* 7)

MULUG PROJECT KINDLES A RAY OF HOPE

R. V. Rao

Rural industries seem to be the weakest link in the C.D. programme. For one reason or the other, the Cottage and Small industries have not made appreciable impact on our rural economy. Unless some way is found to make the rural industries programme self-moving and self-sustaining, neither can we find a lasting solution to the terrible unemployment and under-employment problem rampant in the rural area nor can we secure the ends of social justice by helping the weaker sections to stand on their own against the comparatively privileged sections. There have been a few notable successes here and there like the Mulug Pilot project in Andhra Pradesh the story of which is narrated in this article. Attempts like this may shed some light on the elusive and inscrutable ways of achieving success in the difficult field of village industries. The writer of the article who is the Joint Director of Cottage Industries and Industrial Co-operatives, Andhra Pradesh is modest in his claims when he observes, "It is not that a new heaven and new earth have been created in the Project. Rather, something has been attempted and something done, and still there is a long way to go. But for all of us the most rewarding experience is the journey itself."—Ed.

THE MULUG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK constitutes one of the most backward areas of Telengana in Andhra Pradesh. Most of the inhabitants are tribals. The economy of the area is predominantly agricultural and abundant forest resources are available in and around the project. The jungle tracts and the high incidence of Malaria were natural hindrances to settled life in this area. The result was that the people had lost zest for life and were obliged to live a semi-nomadic life in search of food.

The abject poverty and miserable plight of the poor inhabitants of these villages provided grist to the mills of anti-social elements who made them the targets of their terrorist activities. And thus their cup of misery was full. They dragged on existence little knowing why and for whom they lived.

PILOT PROJECT

Such was the sad state of affairs only eight years ago when the Mulug Community Development Block was first started in 1953. In pursuance of the recommendations made by the Development Commissioners' Conference held at Simla, it was decided to start one pilot project in each state, with bias towards village industries so as to provide opportunities of employment to the unemployed and the underemployed. The Mulug Project was lucky to be selected as the one and only Pilot Project in Andhra Pradesh where the rural industries programme was sought to be implemented.

GROWING PROSPERITY

Six years is not a long period in the history of a community. But during this brief period enough has been achieved to warrant the growing prosperity of the area. Sufficient new employment opportunities have been created and there is enough food and work to go round. The socio-economic transformation already brought about is clearly reflected in the change of people's attitude towards village Salvoy about which people used to say in the past "If you want to die, go to Salvoy". Instead, they now assert "If you want to live, go to Salvoy." This small village is now humming with a number of fruitful and paying village and small industries.

INDUSTRIES THROUGH CO-OPERATION

In the Block as a whole, the village industries have made considerable headway, and the secret of their success lies

in the principle of Co-operation—the unfailing weapon of the weak. The Rice Industrial Co-operative Society is carrying on handpounding of rice and thus provides not only employment to a number of people but helps in furthering the objective of supplying nutritious and wholesome diet to the common man. Besides, a model tannery, a village Oil Industrial Co-operative Society and a co-operative for making soap from non-edible oils are functioning successfully. Palm Gur which is a traditional cottage industry has been promoted so that it now provides employment to over one hundred persons. The weaving industry has received a great fillip as a result of the formation of a co-operative society. Whereas previously, a weaver could not go beyond 20 counts, he is today weaving upto 60 counts. The society has produced goods worth over a lakh of rupees. A housing colony has been sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 50,000. Tassar silk industry is a traditional one but in the past, it declined so much that it employed hardly five persons in 1955. Now well over 100 families are engaged in this industry and are earning Rs. 400 to Rs. 500 per year.

TRAINING CENTRE

A Training Centre was started to train artisans for carrying on industries by improved techniques. So far 71 weavers, 30 tailors, 27 carpenters and 9 blacksmiths have been trained and goods worth over Rs. 50,000 produced and sold at the centre. Generally, the value of training is lost because of inadequate follow-up programme and the trainees, therefore, fail to rehabilitate themselves in the industries for which they were trained. But thanks to an effective follow-up programme, 11 trainees have obtained employment, 150 are self-employed and 46 have been brought into co-operative fold. Here is what Ramachandriah, aged 25, son of Malliah of Devagiripatnam who underwent training in weaving at the centre said on interview, "I belong to a weaver's family. Our income from weaving used to be so meagre in the past that we had to supplement it by working as labourers. Before I was trained at the Training Centre, I could weave only course yarn of 6 to 8 counts. Now I can weave upto 60 counts. Before the Community Project came I used to hawk the goods from door to door. Some remained unsold while the rest had to be disposed of at cheap rates. There was great difficulty in obtaining the raw materials and we had to go to Warrangal to make the purchases. But now marketing and procurement of raw material pose no problems. My earnings have increased by 25 per cent."

Like Ramachandriah there are many more in the Block who have improved their art and craftsmanship and are able to earn an honest and decent living. They have shown by their living examples how the rural industries can become the saviour of the weak and the 'have-nots' in our society. The Mulug Project shows that all is not over yet and there is hope and a bright future for the village industries if only proper approach is made to reach the goal.

LETTERS

(Continued from page 5)

done. Instead they like to show whatever little authority they may be having. Can you imagine such people in private industry or business?

The ceramic workshop is maintained for training purposes and whatever articles the trainees make are sold there. In fact it is a sort of encouragement when people go and buy their products. But due to the behaviour of the official in charge, I had to tell him that I was no more interested in his clumsy products and that he could keep them for himself.

I am sure nobody desires such persons to be in charge of these institutions. But I wonder what it is that makes them so. If they had joined private business, their behaviour would have been quite different. Is there something in Government service which turns the heads of people and makes them oblivious of simple courteousness?

Yours etc.

V. D. Malgavkar

Post Jaglbet,
Via Londa, S. Rly.

Sons of the Soil

BEST GRAM SEVAK OF THE YEAR

SHRI RAGHBIR SINGH MANDHAR of the Sanahwal circle of Ludhiana Community Development Block in Punjab was adjudged country's best Gram Sevak for the year 1960-61 and awarded a prize of Rs. 2,500 at a function held in New Delhi in May last. Shri S. K. Dey, Union Minister for Community Development & Co-operation gave away the prize.

The 40 year old Shri Mandhar was a Sub-Inspector in the Agriculture Department, having passed the "Makhadam" course from the Lyallpur Agricultural College in 1941. It was in 1956 that he was selected as a Gram Sevak to work under the Community Development Programme.

The degree of excellence attained in the extension technique as well as in the assimilation of the spirit of Community Development by Shri Mandhar in a short period of six years is evident from the fact that he is this year's best Gram Sevak of the country. Of course, a sound grounding in the techniques of improved farming has been his strongest point. In the Sanahwal circle comprising 11 villages covering an area of 8,877 acres where he has been serving, the agricultural production has gone up by 25 per cent. The number of compost-pits has gone up to 685 from mere 127 during the short period of 3 years he has held charge of the circle. Out of 805 farmers, 769 have taken up application of fertilisers. About 275 tons of fertilisers were distributed and 365 acres were brought under green manuring. Seed multiplication also made considerable progress under Shri Mandhar's guidance and about 2,500 mds. of hybrid maize and 8,000 mds. of wheat seed were multiplied. The area under irrigation was stepped up by 600 acres.

Improved implements have been introduced on a fairly large scale. As many as 139 iron ploughs were introduced in one year. Shri Mandhar arranged 69 demonstration plots as a result of which considerable success was achieved in popularising improved farming techniques. Line sowing was adopted in 2,285 acres, and solar heat treatment was given to 4,650 mds. of wheat seed. Plant protection measures were adopted over 958 acres under crops.

Animal husbandry work also received due attention at Shri Mandhar's hands. Steps for improvement of breed included removal of 67 useless cattle to *gosadans*. Poultry farming received great impetus as a result of the distribution of 5,700 hatching eggs. About 400 persons was induced to start poultry farming.

The Cooperative movement has also not been lost sight of. Service co-operative societies have been formed in ten out of the 11 villages in Shri Mandhar's circle, thus covering 85% of the rural families. The societies have been doing very useful work in the distribution of credit, improved seeds, implements and fertilisers.

Shri Mandhar himself thinks that he has always held before himself the two principles of punctuality and sincerity. According to him, he has never attempted anything in a half-hearted manner. He has always put his soul into anything he has been called upon to perform. That is the secret of his success.

(*Continued on page* 11)

This Happened in a Village

The Model Village of Amoor

D. A. Thanapandian

AMOOR WAS SELECTED as the model village in Tiruchirapalli District in the year 1955 and was awarded the certificate of merit and a prize of Rs. 1,000 by Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

The story of success of the village is the story of achievement of Shri Thangaraju Pillai, a middle-aged young man, who has devoted a major portion of his time and energy for the welfare of his village. All the works implemented by the Panchayat are due to the dynamic personality, forethought and enthusiasm of its President Shri Thangaraju Pillai to whom the villagers have extended their whole-hearted co-operation.

PIPED WATER SUPPLY

The most striking work that the Panchayat has done is the provision of piped drinking water supply to the villagers. An automatic pumping set has been installed at a cost of Rs. 12,000 and water tap facilities provided at six different places in the village. Out of the six water taps two have been fixed in Harijan bastis. All these taps and the automatic pumping set are maintained by the Panchayat. There is a proposal now to construct an overhead tank at a total cost of Rs. 46,000 under the National Water Supply and Sanitation Scheme.

The village, surrounded by fertile paddy fields, has made great strides in the sphere of agriculture. Improved seeds, chemical fertilisers, and insecticides are purchased at wholesale prices and sold to the farmers at comparatively cheaper rates by the Panchayat through co-operative societies. The villagers have formed a co-operative marketing society also. There is a proposal to construct a godown at a cost of Rs. 12,000 for storing the food grains. Half the cost of the building will be borne by the Government and the remaining half will be paid by the Panchayat in easy instalments. A co-operative credit bank has also been started to enable the villagers to get loans from the bank at low interest rates with facilities to repay it on long term basis. The co-operative milk supply society started in the year 1952 is also functioning efficiently under the guidance of some of the leading farmers of the village.

OTHER FACILITIES

The Information Centre run by the Panchayat is being increasingly made use of by the villagers. It is built in the centre of a beautiful small park. Several Daily papers, weekly and monthly magazines and other literature are kept in the centre. A library is attached to this centre which contains about 100 publications. Valuable books on agriculture, cottage industries, community development programme, public health and hygiene, rural economy etc. are available in this library. During their off-time the villagers go through these valuable publications and keep themselves posted with up-to-date information on all important subjects. A Panchayat Social Education Committee constituted by the Panchayat is in charge of the Information Centre and other social education works. A community listening set has also been installed by the Panchayat. A young farmers' club is functioning which encourages games and other field activities amongst the youth of the village. Free

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COMMUNITY ON THE MOVE

MESSAGE OF SELF-HELP SPREADS

Bera, Lunawa, Lalrai, Mundari and Siwari are small villages in the Bali tehsil of the Pali district of Rajasthan. Lying in the interior of a rugged countryside, cut off from civilization and without modern means of communication, they have for centuries led an almost primitive existence. But thanks to the message of "Shramdan" a transformation has come over the people there now. Shaking off their age-old slumber, they, by their response to the call of self-help, are changing the face of their villages.

The sleepy little village of Bera is sleepy no more. It is throbbing with life. With money provided by two local philanthrophists, the village has constructed an impressive building. This Rs. 50,000 structure on the outskirts of the village houses the only primary health centre within a radius of 16 miles. It also houses a 14-bed well-equipped hospital with a maternity ward.

Adjacent to the hospital has sprung up a nursery school. Not far away stands the Panchayat Ghar which conforms to the model adopted for the whole of the Bali Development Block. The villagers have recently constructed a 24-foot wide road to the railhead three miles away. The road lies over rugged rocky country and its construction entailed great physical effort. The villagers were given technical advice by Government surveyors.

Approach roads to nearby villages have also been laid and teams of men and women are working under scorching sun clearing wild shrub growth.

The villagers' attitude is not merely utilitarian. They have also tried to beautify their villages. In each village, they have planned a circular park where all roads converge. At Bera, they have a clock-tower of a modest height, equidistant from the hospital, nursery school, the Panchayat Ghar and the gateway of the village.

At Lunawa, the students and teachers helped the villagers to build a girls' school in a deserted area of the village. At Lalrai, 80 villagers laboured for two hours daily to deepen the village tank. The villagers of Siwari have helped to construct a Rs. 80,000-building which will house a higher secondary school. More than one-third of the cost of the building has been contributed by local philanthropists.

In Mundari, the Harijans of the village have dug a well for themselves. The menfolk went down a pit and did the digging. Their children put their shoulders to a giant wheel which worked the pulley over which rubble was transported to the surface. Working in unison, the womenfolk carried it to the dumping place.

* * *

OLD WIDOWS SERVE TOO

A 70-year-old widow, Shrimati Ramkuvaur Devi Chandel of Kumbhari village in Marwahi Development Block in Madhya Pradesh, who died in the month of March, has given all her wealth to the Gram Panchayat to be used for village development work. She called all the village leaders to her deathbed and donated all her property which included two houses, one garden and one well.

This noble act of an old woman has inspired the villagers. Another old widow

Smt. Butua, of village Lohari in the same Block has recently donated about seven acres of land to the local Gram Panchayat. The registration of this gift-deed has been done. The land is valued at Rs. 4,500. The Gram Panchayat will make use of the proceeds of this land for development and welfare work. It is worth mentioning that Smt. Butua is the fifth woman of the area who has donated her landed property for village welfare work.

* * *

2-MILE-LONG BUND

The people of the village Khari near Thana on the Bombay-Poona road have set an example in self-help. By building a two-mile-long bund they have been able to reclaim about 350 acres of marshy land for paddy crops.

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RS. 11,000 FOR A ROAD

The villagers of Kathora in the Batiagarh development block in Maharashtra have set an inspiring example by raising Rs. 11,000 by themselves to build a 2-mile pucca approach road up to the highway.

They have further promised to offer *shramdan* of the value of Rs. 4,000. The villagers now plan to build a rest-house-*cum*-community centre for the village and are raising funds for it.

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A WELL THROUGH SHRAMDAN

The residents of village Chakpalri in Sabalgarh Block in Madhya Pradesh have completed a 158 feet deep well through *shramdan*. The well is estimated to cost about Rs. 6,000. So far the village had no drinking water-well and the village women had to walk down a distance of two miles every day to fetch water from village Bartokhar.

SONS OF THE SOIL

(Continued from page 8)

BEST GRAM SEVAK OF UNION TERRITORIES

To Shri S. Manimohan Singh, Gram Sevak of Irimbung circle in Imphal East Development Block of Manipura has gone the State prize for the best Gram Sevak in the Union Territories. He was selected as a Gram Sevak in 1956. The villages under his charge have been subjected to the fury of devastating floods every year. Lush green paddy crops over thousands of acres used to be damaged annually. Tanakha fishery lake in the neighbourhood was known as the "lake of sorrow" because it had been at the root of the trouble. Shri Manimohan Singh persuaded the inhabitants of four villages in the neighbourhood to build an earthen dam around the lake to prevent the water from overflowing. An earthen embankment 1½ miles long, 32 ft. wide and 10 ft. high was built through the hill folk's voluntary labour, thus stopping the nuisance of floods for ever.

Shri Manimohan Singh has assisted in the organisation of a service co-operative society in each village in his circle. This has gone a long way in meeting the agricultural requirements of the poor hill folk. Pine-apple cultivation has been promoted extensively. About 104 acres on hill slopes were reclaimed for this purpose. Though the hill folk were not used to systematic use of compost manure Shri Manimohan Singh initiated them into its use and 400 compost pits were dug during the year.

FROM THE CENTRE

TRAINING CAMP FOR YOUTH WORKERS

About 50 officials and non-officials associated with the programme of youth welfare got together at Taradevi, near Simla for a five-day training camp sponsored by the Union Ministry of C.D. and Co-operation. The Participants included State Directors of Youth Programme, Directors of In-service Training, selected Principals of the Extension Training Centres & Home Science Wings, a few lecturers of the SEOTCs, as also the representatives of the Bharat Scouts and Guides, Bharat Sevak Samaj, Young Farmers' Association and the Y.M.C.A. It discussed the organisation of the youth programmes at the State level, with special reference to the provisions made in the Departments of Community Development, Agriculture, Education etc., as also the needs of rural youth in the context of changes brought about in the areas covered by the C.D. programme. The programme for the training camp also includes four workshops on the programme of youth organisations in the villages; on the organisation of State level training camps of the staff of the Gram Sevikas Training Centres; on the organisation of training camps at Extension Training Centres for village youth leaders and workers; and on the preparation of a guide book for the promotion of youth organisations in rural areas.

* * *

AWARDS FOR MERITORIOUS WORK

It has been suggested to the State Governments that awards in the shape of "Sanads", or certificates of appreciation—combined, if necessary, with an amount in cash—may be instituted at the State level for the recognition of meritorious work in the fields of community services. The field include the promotion of panchayats and extension work in agriculture, animal husbandry and rural industries, etc. The awards are to be given on certain National days, such as Independence Day and Republic Day.

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CENTRAL COMMITTEE DECISIONS

The Central Committee of the Planning Commission which met recently reviewed the progress of Panchayati Raj and Community Development work in the country and discussed various issues passed by them. It was agreed that M.P.s and M.L.As should be associated with the working of the various panchayat bodies as ex-officio members and as such they should not be eligible either to hold office or to vote. If, however, they become eligible to hold office in these bodies through election from lower levels, they should resign either the office in the Panchayati Raj institution or their membership of the legislature. As regards the acid tests of Panchayati Raj, it was felt that since agriculture was the top national priority, promotion of agriculture should come first followed by promotion of rural industries and development of Co-operative institutions in the area. It was felt that the Blocks which had put in successful efforts for increasing agricultural production and thereby demonstrated their capacity for rapid growth should be provided with some incentive for intensive development. The Chairman observed that incentives should be built round the programme of rural industrialisation with attention concentrated on selected items like workshop for agricultural implements and other requirements, training facilities etc. The programme should generally aim at making the people more machine-minded.

ALLOTMENT OF BLOCKS

Pre-extension Blocks allotted so far by the Union Ministry of Community Development & Co-operation in the April 1961 series number 142. Following is the State-wise break-up of the pre-extension Blocks:—Andhra Pradesh 26; Bihar 35; Kerala 8; Madhya Pradesh 22; Mysore 16; Orissa 16; Rajasthan 12; Manipur 1 and NEFA 5.

State Governments have been asked that, in the interest of rapid increase in food production, they should give the highest priority to the location of blocks now allotted to wheat and paddy areas, with secured irrigation facilities or adequate rainfall, so that intensive work can be undertaken.

The allotment has been made on the understanding that the existing shortages in the Village Level Workers and Extension Officer (Agriculture) will have been filled up, and requisite staff will be in position before the new pre-extension blocks are actually opened.

One hundred and fifty six pre-extension Blocks are to be upgraded to Stage I, as part of the April 1961 series. Following is the Statewise break-up of the pre-extension Blocks upgraded to Stage I:—Andhra Pradesh 22; Bihar 29; Kerala 7; Madhya Pradesh 14; Mysore 12; Orissa 16; Rajasthan 10, and Uttar Pradesh 46.

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WEAKER SECTIONS OF VILLAGE COMMUNITY

The problem of ensuring that benefits of the C.D. programme flow properly to the weaker sections of the village community is being looked into by a Study Team, under the Chairmanship of Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan.

For extending the benefit of Community Development programme to the weaker sections of the community in rural areas, especially through the democratic bodies like Panchayat Samitis and Panchayats, the Ministry of Community Development have already made several recommendations to the State Governments. In pursuance of these recommendations, departmental funds, either specially earmarked or otherwise provided out of the general budget for the welfare and development of the weaker sections of the community, are to be placed at the disposal of Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis for being spent to meet the felt needs of the weaker sections within the broad pattern laid down by the State.

Every Panchayat Samiti is to earmark a percentage of its own funds, depending on the proportion of the population of the area, constituting the weaker sections of community, for their economic development and welfare.

A separate sub-committee, with powers to incur expenditure up to a specified limit, is to be constituted at the Panchayat and Panchayat Samiti level to look after this programme. This, it is hoped, will make for quick implementation of the programme.

Rules regarding grant of loans and percentage of contribution in grant-in-aid programmes are to be further liberalised in favour of the weaker sections.

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WELFARE PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN

The Union Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation have suggested to the State Governments to undertake a certain minimum programme for welfare of women and children in each C.D. Block.

The programme is to be determined taking into consideration the local conditions. Each Block is to concentrate on three or four items of the programme like nutrition, family planning, literacy and social education and enrolment of school children, beautification of the homes through local resources, recreational activities, improvement of the economic conditions by activities such as poultry keeping, bee-keeping etc.

It has been suggested to the State Governments that there should be at least one good Mahila Mandal in each Village Level Workers' circle of 10 villages, to be started within a specified period and run by associate women workers.

The minimum programme, it has been pointed out, may best be implemented by the Block authorities through a functional sub-committee of the Panchayat Samiti, or the Block Development Committee. The sub-committee,

with a majority of women members, is to be constituted exclusively for promoting women and children's programmes in the Block.

The functional sub-committees will have to devote special efforts to the building up of voluntary organisations, such as Mahila Mandals or women's centres, each with a Balwadi, an adult education centre and a craft or a unit like poultry and kitchen garden attached to it. Such a centre can be developed in or around a girls' school if there is one or with the assistance of women workers, like Gram Lakshmis, Gram Kakis and the women primary school teachers.

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TRAINING OF PRIVATE CANDIDATES IN SEOTCs

According to a recent decision of the Union Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation Social Education Organisers' Training Centres can admit private candidates of their choice to the training courses. Admission of such persons will depend on the availability of seats at the Centres. For giving training to these persons, the Training Centre can not claim any assistance from the Central Government. Persons seeking admission should have the minimum educational qualifications prescribed for the Social Education Organisers and Mukhya Sevikas namely they should be graduates preferably in Social Sciences for Social Education Organisers and those seeking Mukhya Sevikas training must have passed Higher Secondary or Pre-University or Intermediate Courses.

The persons while under training will not receive any stipend from the Central Government. They may be charged such tuition fees etc. as the Centre considers appropriate. There is no guarantee of appointment to the persons undergoing such training.

THIS HAPPENED IN A VILLAGE

(Continued from page 9)

mid-day meals are given to deserving school students from the contributions made by the villagers themselves.

In the sphere of public health also, substantial progress has been achieved. Three public latrines and one urinal have been constructed. Besides, one dry earth latrine and one Wardha lavatory have also been built. Bathing rooms have also been constructed for the villagers. A number of dust-bins have been provided for throwing the waste materials.

The village, which is about half a mile from the Tiruchy-Salem main road is connected by a kutcha road. Recently a bridge over three channels and a road connecting this village to ten or twelve nearby villages were constructed. The villagers have contributed about Rs. 3,000 to these important works. The members of this Panchayat have exerted themselves to the utmost in mobilising under-employed and unemployed for the implementation of village development schemes. Cottage industries like match factory, pencil factory etc. have been recently introduced in the village. Charkhas have been distributed to the villagers and the women folk have taken to spinning with delight.

The key to the success achieved by this village lies in the fact that it has got good leadership. The Panches are alive to their duties and carry out the programmes with sincerity and devotion. It is this which elicits spontaneous and whole-hearted co-operation of the entire village. There is no room for political or communal controversies.

AROUND THE STATES

UTTAR PRADESH

It is reported that in the recent Panchayat elections, only women were elected as Punches to the Pura Viyayee Gaon Sabha of Varanasi district. The election was unanimous. The village is mostly inhabited by the Mallahs (boatmen).

GUJARAT

The Gujarat Government is examining the report of the Democratic Decentralisation Committee with a view to drafting necessary legislation.

BIHAR

The Bihar Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Bill, 1961, has been referred to a Joint Committee of both the Houses.

The State Government have taken a decision to entrust collection of land revenue to Village Panchayats with effect from 31-5-61. The Panchayats will get a commission on the collections.

KERALA

Preliminary to the implementation of the new Panchayats Act, delimitation of Panchayats is being done in Kerala. It is expected that the new Panchayats will start functioning by November 1961.

ORISSA

The District Development Boards in Orissa have been abolished consequent on the setting up of Zila Parishads and the functions of these bodies have been entrusted to the Parishads. It has been decided to transfer primary schools to the control of Panchayat Samitis. Zonal Conferences on Community Development were held in all the districts of the State during April 1961, in which the working of Panchayati Raj institutions and the implementation of the programme through them were discussed.

MYSORE

It had been decided to transfer a number of Plan schemes of the various Departments to Taluk Boards. A procedure has been outlined according to which allocation of all funds will be first made to the District Development Council, which in turn will allot the amounts to the Taluk Boards, thereby giving further impetus to the Block as the unit of Planning and Development.

* * *

A decision has been taken to prepare village production plans in respect of at least one village in each Village Level Worker's circle, and in respect of all villages in one selected block in each district. Panchayats seem to have taken up this work with enthusiasm.

* * *

A programme has been drawn up for Study Camps for Panchayat Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen in each block. The block seminar will be conducted in the first quarter of each year, the District seminar in the second, the Divisional seminar in the third and the State seminar in the fourth quarter.

ANDHRA PRADESH

The State Government has decided to split up the present Directorate of Local Administration which deals with both Panchayati Raj and Municipalities. There will be a separate wing to look after the functioning of Village Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads under a Commissioner. In order to strengthen District Panchayat Officers, it is proposed to appoint additional staff since District Panchayat Officers have to tour 20 days in a month.

RAJASTHAN

The State Government of Rajasthan have decided as an experimental measure to invest one Panchayat Samiti in each district with the responsibility for land revenue collection in its jurisdiction. The selection of Panchayat Samitis for the purpose will be based on their performance in the development programmes.

USEFUL TIPS

OVER-IRRIGATION HARMFUL

Too much water is as harmful to a crop as too little of it. With too much irrigation the plant materials in the soil are washed off; plant-roots are not able to breathe. The water, which could have been best used for irrigating other crops, is thus wasted, and the land becomes water-logged. It is, therefore, important to know when irrigation should be stopped.

Dig in several places close to the plants and find out how far down the roots have reached. Push into the soil in different parts of the field a solid steel rod, ½ inch thick, four feet long and having a short handle. It will go in easily to the depth where water has reached. To push it further will be a hard job. Now pull out this rod. Measure the length to which it has gone in the soil. This is the depth to which the soil has received water. If this depth is the same as that to which the roots have also gone, stop irrigation.

FOR MANGO GROWERS

Mango growers usually collect stones (seeds) of mixed varieties of mango from the streets and wayside places during the harvest season, and sow them in pots for raising stock plants for grafting later on.

This is not a good practice. To get healthy, quick-growing stocks which will grow to the right size for grafting in the shortest time possible, fruits of a selected country mango tree known for producing vigorous seedlings should be collected and their seeds extracted for growing stocks.

If this is not possible, good, plump, healthy, full stones should be sorted out from the mixed lot, collected and sown first in a small bed. After about two months, the most vigorously growing seedlings among them should be planted in pots.

HIGH SEED-RATE

Where a transplanted crop of rice is grown, farmers generally tend to use a high seed-rate for the nursery.

Experiments have shown that this practice is wasteful. A seed-rate of 10 to 15 pounds per acre has been found to be sufficient. This quantity should be sown in a seedbed area of five to seven cents.

Thin sowing encourages seedlings to grow sturdy and healthy. The practice not only increases yield, but also effects a good saving in seed.

NEW RAGI VARIETIES

The Mysore Department of Agriculture is distributing to farmers three new '*ragi*' varieties good for growing in wetland areas. They are named *Aruna*, *Udaya* and *Purna*.

All the three are early varieties (take 105 days from seed to seed), and actually occupy the land for 75 to 80 days after the nursery stage.

All the three varieties can be cultivated any time during the year excepting during October-November and even when the irrigation available is not very much. This enables farmers to plant as well as harvest the *ragi* crop early, so that they have enough time for the next crop. All the three nature uniformly and, as such, farmers can pick all the ears in one picking. When compared to other short-duration *ragi* types, these are high yielders. The *ragi* varieties grown at present under dry conditions mature late, and also they are highly season-bound. When the rains are late, these varieties cannot be grown and hence the land is often left fallow or put under legumes. But the new varieties can be very easily grown within the same rainy period.

In the canal areas, these varieties can be grown in summer with a minimum use of irrigation water. Because they can be planted early and harvested early, it is possible to grow a green manure crop before the main crop season. This means the growing of two additional crops—a foodgrain crop and a green manure crop—without interfering with the usual cropping system and with the available irrigation facilities.

Members of a Co-operative Labour and Construction Society in Punjab digging the passage for a seasonal river for flood prevention and removing water logging in the adjacent fields.

THE SUGARY TREK: Carts laden with sugarcane are wending their way to Bhogwati Co-operative Sugar Mill in District Kolhapur.

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